

SUSPENSION PACKAGES AND SYSTEMS, AND METHODS OF USING SAME

RELATED APPLICATIONS

FF

[0001] This application is a continuation-in-part of Application No. 10/336,624, filed January 3, 2003, ^{Pending} the entire contents of which are incorporated herein by reference, except that in the event of any inconsistent disclosure or definition from the present application, the disclosure or definition herein shall be deemed to prevail.

FIELD OF THE INVENTION

[0002] The present invention relates to suspension packages and, more particularly, to suspension packages for protecting products against shipping damage caused in transit.

BACKGROUND

[0003] Various designs of packaging structures have been proposed, including designs having a rigid panel and a flexible film material superimposed thereon. In such designs, an object inserted between the rigid panel and the flexible film material may be held in place against the rigid panel by folding the sides of the structure to tighten the flexible film material against the object. Such immobilization-type packaging structures are described in United States Patent Nos. 5,678,695, 6,010,006, and 6,148,591 to Ridgeway et al. The use of such packaging structures is generally limited to transporting products that are not regarded as being highly breakable but for which immobilization during shipment would be nonetheless desirable (e.g., books, compact discs (CDs), digital video discs (DVDs), and the like). However, there are problems associated with the use of such designs including damage (e.g., scuffing, dulling, etc.) to the object (e.g., the dust jacket of a book) caused by rubbing between the object and the rigid panel, and damage to the object caused in transit when some portion thereof slips out from under the flexible film material and bumps against the sides of the